



# THE DIPPER

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EVERGREEN AUDUBON NEWSLETTER

[www.evergreenaudubon.org](http://www.evergreenaudubon.org)

## Your invitation to a Mexican fiesta is coming soon!

Keep an eye out for your personal invitation to Evergreen Audubon's Mexican cloud forest fiesta!

Thursday, Oct. 3, from 5:30-8:30 at Evergreen Lake House, Evergreen Audubon will host a colorful evening with nature-loving friends to raise funds for Evergreen Nature Center.

From delicious food, sangria and margaritas to a local crafts Mercado and entertainment, the 2013 Bird House Bash: Aves sin Fronteras is sure to be a fiesta to remember!

Register by Sept. 19 to receive a refreshing Bash Bonus! Registrations are accepted at the EA website, by mail or in person at Evergreen Nature Center.

### Join our BHB decorations group

Are you a crafty or organized person? Evergreen Audubon needs your help making the 2013 Bird House Bash: Aves sin Fronteras a colorful and smooth-going celebration!

This is your chance to keep Evergreen Nature Center a growing part of our mountain community. There is a role for everyone! We need volunteers to help with decorations, the auction, setting up the day of the event and publicity.

#### Mexican tablecloths needed

Do you have a Mexican blanket tablecloth (serape) that Evergreen Audubon can borrow for the Bird House Bash: Aves sin Fronteras (birds without borders)?

We need 12-15 tablecloths to use as colorful overlays on top of dinner and service tablecloths. Please drop off tablecloths at Evergreen Nature Center as soon as possible during weekend operating hours.


Email or call Vanessa to arrange a different drop off time: [enctdirector@evergreenaudubon.org](mailto:enctdirector@evergreenaudubon.org), 303-330-0489.



Find out how you can help make the Bird House Bash a success and learn to make gorgeous, simple paper decorations on Monday, Sept. 16, from 5-8 p.m. at Kathy Madison's house. Dinner will be provided.

Sign up for the Decoration-making Meeting at the online Volunteer Information Center ([www.volgistics.com](http://www.volgistics.com)), or by email to Vanessa Hayes ([enctdirector@evergreenaudubon.org](mailto:enctdirector@evergreenaudubon.org)) or Ginny Ades ([development@evergreenaudubon.org](mailto:development@evergreenaudubon.org)) or by phone at 303-330-0489.

If you can't make the meeting, but still want to help, email Vanessa or Ginny.



**Bird House Bash**  
benefiting  
**Evergreen Nature Center**

**Aves sin Fronteras**  
birds without borders

Support Evergreen Nature Center:  
Join Evergreen Audubon's Mexican cloud forest fiesta, celebrating migrating birds!

**Thursday, October 3, 2013**  
5:30-8:30pm  
at Evergreen Lake House

**Tickets: \$50 for guests \$75 for patrons**

RSVP by September 19 to receive a bash bonus  
[www.EvergreenAudubon.org](http://www.EvergreenAudubon.org)

**EVERGREEN AUDUBON**  
www.evergreenaudubon.org

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Meetings first Thursday, 7 p.m., Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road, Evergreen, except January. Meetings in June, July and August are held at Evergreen Nature Center.

# Evergreen Audubon holiday wreath fundraiser under way

Need the perfect holiday gift? Evergreen Audubon has lovely and reasonably priced balsam fir holiday wreaths for sale.

We're offering three different types of 25-inch wreaths available for in-town pickup and four for out-of-town delivery. Pictures of all of the wreaths and pricing will be posted soon on our website, www.evergreen-audubon.org.

If you would like to place an order, call Marilyn Rhodes at 303-674-9895 or email her at cloverlane@aol.com. Orders are due by Oct. 29.

Payment, by cash or check, for in-town wreaths is due at pickup and for out-of-town wreaths at time of order. The wreaths should be delivered just before Thanksgiving.

Please support Evergreen Audubon by participating in this important fundraiser and get ready for the holidays now!

- Marilyn Rhodes

# Renowned photographer, birder to headline RMBO BBQ

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory will host the 11th annual BBQ for the Birds, a yearly celebration of birds, people and land, to raise funds for conservation and education programs.

The BBQ for the Birds will take place from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Oct. 5 at the Old Stone House at Barr Lake State Park, 14500 Lark Bunting Lane in Brighton, Colo.

The event is open to the public and features bird banding, bird walks, kids' activities, live raptors, live music, workshops, presentations, exhibitors, silent and live auctions, and a harvest-themed lunch.

This year, Greg Miller will lead a bird walk at 7 a.m., make the featured presentation, "My Big Year," and host a workshop on citizen science with RMBO biologist Jeff Birek. Miller is a nationally acclaimed speaker whose participation in a birding competition was portrayed in the book and film "The Big Year."

In addition, award-winning wildlife photographer Noppadol Paothong will host a photography workshop at 9:30 a.m. Paothong recently published the book "Save the Last Dance: A Story of North American Grassland Grouse."

Admission, which includes lunch and all activities, is \$11 for RMBO members, \$13 for non-members, \$6 for ages 5-12 and free for kids under 5.

Register by Sept. 27 and save \$1 off per person. Register online at www.rmbo.org or by calling 970-482-1707 ext. 30 by Oct. 3, or at the door on the day of the event.

Proceeds from the BBQ for the Birds will benefit RMBO's conservation and education programs. The event is sponsored by Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Wild Birds Unlimited and United Power.

Founded in 1988, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory is a Colorado-based nonprofit that works to conserve birds and their habitats in the Rocky Mountains, Great Plains and Mexico by advancing science, engaging people and conserving western lands.

# 'Birds of Two Worlds': Sept. 5 chapter meeting

Where do our Colorado birds go in the winter?

Greg Levandoski, director of operations for Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's International Programs, will address that question at the Sept. 5 EA chapter meeting.

This year's Bird House Bash is labeled "Aves sin Fronteras," which translates to "birds without borders," because it will celebrate Mexico-Colorado bird connections.

Greg will focus on those connections, highlighting several issues.

Attempting to reverse declining bird populations by only focusing on breeding ground issues could be a futile and expensive effort.

Full life-cycle monitoring is gaining recognition as a critical component of avian conservation efforts.

In other words, it's important to also study birds during migration or on their winter grounds to understand the threats they face when away from "home."

Only by identifying which stages of species' life cycles have the greatest risk of mortality can we effectively direct our energies and funding toward reducing mortality levels.

To address these issues, RMBO created its International Program, which includes studies in the Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands, where Greg is involved.

According to the RMBO website, of the 34 grassland-obligate species breeding in the western Great Plains, 85 percent over-winter in the Chihuahua.

Because so many of North America's grassland bird species concentrate in the limited grasslands of Chihuahuan Desert, suitable habitat in this region is critical to their conservation.

Unfortunately, the loss of desert grasslands is accelerating, especially in Mexico where more than 1 million acres have been lost in Chihuahua alone since 2005.

Many Chihuahuan Desert grasslands have been destroyed or radically altered through conversion to cropland, inappropriate grazing, urbanization and invasive species.

The ongoing loss of wintering habitat is likely a principal factor in population declines among species wintering here. RMBO is working with partners in



*Lark Bunting. Photo by Jose Hugo Martinez Guerrero*

Mexico and the United States to conserve Chihuahuan Desert grasslands and the birds that depend on them.

During Greg's talk, he'll share some interesting details about three initiatives:

- RMBO's first-of-its-kind, region-wide winter monitoring program in the Chihuahuan Desert,
- RMBO's efforts to pinpoint causes of mortality and understand over-winter survival of Baird's, Grasshopper and Vesper sparrows,
- RMBO's new program to engage private landowners in Mexico in a mutually beneficial relationship to improve grasslands and to learn about a new pilot project with a Mexican university and the Mexican government to study bird populations in the cloud forests of Jalisco.

Greg fell in love with avian field research immediately after receiving a bachelor's degree in ecology and evolutionary biology from the University of New Hampshire in 1996.

He has worked on a variety of research projects, ranging from monitoring nesting alcids (Auklets, Puffins, Murres, etc) in the Bering Sea to counting migrating raptors along Western ridge lines and chasing warblers through Caribbean thorn forests.



*A Baird's Sparrow is fitted with a backpack transmitter. The transmitter extends from the tail feathers and weighs 3% of the bird's body weight. Photo by Greg Levandoski*

However, most of his work has been in monitoring populations of passerines (perching birds) in the western United States. The search for a broad base of experience to understand avian conservation needs led him to work in 15 U.S. states (10 Western), three Mexican states and Jamaica.

Greg joined RMBO and its International Program in 2007 and currently serves as director of International Operations and the Partners in Flight database manager.

He works on a variety of large-scale monitoring and research projects in Mexico that aim to increase understanding of the distributions and abundances of wintering birds populations.

The chapter meeting will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 5, at Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road (across from Evergreen Library).

- Kathy Madison, Education Director

## NATURE CENTER PROGRAM

**Stargazing at Evergreen Lake**

**Saturday, Sept. 7, 8 p.m.**

**All ages**

Bring a blanket or camp chairs. Join amateur astronomer Pam Little each month for a tour of the night sky. Meet on the west side of the lake parking lot.



## Yard Birds

On July 25, while driving by my neighbors' house in Hiwan Hills, I saw a huge elk nursery.

I stopped to gawk and Dave and Karen Lystrom invited me to observe from their deck.

We counted 25–26 elk calves and more than 22 cows and a few young bulls surrounding their home, which, not surprisingly, has a wonderful fenced vegetable garden.

On Aug. 1, David Walker reported, "Feels like a bird nursery here in my yard in Indian Hills.

"Five species are raising their broods: **Magpie, House Wren, Downy Woodpecker, American Crow and Black-headed Grosbeak.**

"The Magpies built a big nest in a spruce, and the grosbeaks are consuming amazing quantities of sunflower seeds. The adult male tends to scare off his offspring until he's satisfied."

**Lesser Goldfinch and Black-headed Grosbeak** continued to visit my feeders in July and August.

The family of **Violet-green Swallows** that nested inside one of my nest-cam nest boxes hatched four chicks, I believe.

It's hard to see exactly how many because it is such a small space and they are all piled on top of one another. All four chicks fledged early the morning of Aug. 5. I am an empty nester now . . . sigh.

## Evergreen area

Chuck Aid was in the right place at the right time Aug. 7. He reported "at least 90 **Evening Grosbeaks**" west of Marshdale on a cool, wet afternoon.

## Evergreen Lake

Margaret McDole enjoyed a nice moment the same day:

"While walking around Evergreen Lake late Wednesday afternoon I saw a flock of about 10 **Cedar Waxwings**.

"They flew out toward the lake to catch insects, then back to the dead branches of a tree near where the trail goes up a short incline toward the



*Great Blue Herons on the nest on Upper Bear Creek. Photo by Shirley Casey*



*Bullock's Oriole fledgling at Lair o' the Bear. Photo by Sherman Wing*

pedestrian crossing of Highway 74 What an enjoyable sight!"

On Aug. 8, Shirley Casey photo-

graphed three **Great Blue Herons** on the nest on Upper Bear Creek.

## Lair o' the Bear Bear Creek Watershed Breeding Bird Atlas

On July 13, team leader Sherman Wing found a **Great Blue Heron** adult and a fledgling that he was able to include in the Lair o' the Bear breeders.

The two birds were seen at the Kittredge Water Treatment pond, across from O'Fallon Park.

On July 28, Sherman gave his final report on Lair o' the Bear atlas activity:

"Many of the summer residents have completed their nesting activities, courtship, nest building, fledglings and now they're off to points south.

"This season at Lair o' the Bear we identified 85 species and confirmed breeding for 44 species—just about 52% confirmation in one season."

Sherman shared some memories:

- \* He reflected on going out on cold mornings, when winter still had a grip on the countryside. Then his heart would warm and delight to hear the song of the **American Dipper**.

- For weeks, before the buds popped, the group would hear a pair of **Belted Kingfishers** "rattling" as they patrolled the creek.

- Color finally came back when the **Bullock's Oriole** flew in. Their shockingly bright colors were mesmerizing.

- Then all of the sudden it was spring, shrubs leafed out, bugs started

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to come in and soon **Yellow Warblers** were plentiful.

- **House Wrens** sang up a storm, grabbing up territory and defending it.

- **The Black-chinned Hummingbird** gave the atlasers a thrill, although they were not able to get confirmed breeding for it.

- Summer came and we started seeing nests and babies all over the place. A **Brown-headed Cowbird** was seen in a **Warbling Vireo's** nest.

### Genesee Park

I led a Denver Mountain Parks field trip on July 13 and gave the large group great looks and photo ops of an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** and **Western Bluebird** in the park.

### Mount Falcon

My friend PJ and I had a wonderful day in the park that started shortly after sunrise July 31. There was lots of activity in the forest and the meadows.

We saw dozens of **Western** and **Mountain bluebirds** and **Chipping Sparrows**, **Townsend's Solitaires**, **Plumbeous Vireos**, **Violet-green Swallows** about to fledge, **Western Tanagers**, all three nuthatches and both chickadees.

We also saw a **White-throated Swift** and a **Peregrine Falcon**, probably some of the birds that nest at Red Rocks.

Best bird of the day was the one we scored first, a **Dusky Grouse**—a Life Bird for me and my friend.

### Mount Evans

I had a fabulous day on the mountain with seven other friends, including Bob Santangelo. We got all our target bird and mammal species and then some.

Best finds on the tundra were **Brown-capped Rosy-Finch**, **White-tailed Ptarmigan** (four hens and a chick), **Peregrine Falcon**, lots of **American Pipits**, **White-crowned Sparrow**, **Common Ravens**.

At Echo Lake Lodge we had a delish breakfast while observing many hummingbirds out the window.

Our walk around Echo Lake produced some interesting sightings, includ-



*A Broad-tailed Hummingbird feeds two very new chicks (hidden from view) at Lair o' the Bear Park on Aug. 2. Photo by Susan Harper*

ing three **Barrow's Goldeneye** hens and four fledglings on the water.

The eBird moderator, Tony Leukering, confirmed all goldeneye photographed as **Barrow's**, stating, "**Common**

is not known to breed in the state. The species (**Barrow's**) bred at this location last year, too, the first time known breeding away from the Flat Tops in the state since around 1900."

We also got long looks at three **Red-naped Sapsuckers**, two juvies feeding on tender limbs and an adult preening in a tree.

**Lincoln's**, **Song** and **Fox sparrows** sang/called from the willows and gave us brief looks.

We heard and saw **Red Crossbills** on treetops and many **Yellow-rumped Warbler** adults and fledglings. We observed **Wilson's Warblers** in the willows and **Gray Jays** and **Clark's Nutcrackers** in the picnic area.

It was a great day for mammals on the tundra, too, and they gave us many photo ops.

We saw Rocky Mountain Goats with young, Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep with young, Pikas and Yellow-bellied Marmots with young, plus we had a first-three Long-tailed Weasels, two adults and a juvie!

It was a super day—and it didn't start raining until we got in the car and headed home.

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*A U.S. record bird, the Rufous-necked Wood-Rail, was spotted in July at Bosque del Apache in New Mexico. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes*



# Veterans memorial paver dedicated to Bill Mounsey



The Veterans Commemorative Walk, above, and the dedicated paver. Photos by Karel Buckley

Longtime Evergreen Audubon member Bill Mounsey has been honored posthumously with a paver on the Veterans Commemorative Walk sponsored by the local American Legion Post. Bill had a long career with the U.S. Army and served with the Americal Division at the battle of Bougainville (part of the Solomon Islands).

The Veterans Commemorative Walk–Evergreen, located in Buchanan Park, provides an opportunity for veterans, families, friends and colleagues to recognize those who served our country.



## BIRD BUSINESS MARILYN RHODES, ASGD MASTER BIRDER

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### Rocky Mountain National Park

Made a trip to RMNP July 28 with my friend, Karen, to photograph moose. Saw three cows and one calf but I was only able to get shots of one of them. It rained that day and visibility at the summit of Trail Ridge Road was about 20 feet, so we struck out on ptarmigan.

### Eastern Plains near Byers

On July 23, a party of five birders, including me, headed out to band baby Barn Owls. We successfully banded four babies, and they were pistols!

We got great looks at some grassland birds, too, including **Lark Buntings**, **Grasshopper Sparrows**, **Cassin's**

### Sparrows, Swainson's Hawks, a Golden Eagle and Burrowing Owls.

The unlikely find of the day was a large flock of **Baird's Sandpipers** on a pool of water on a farm.

### Casper, Wyo.

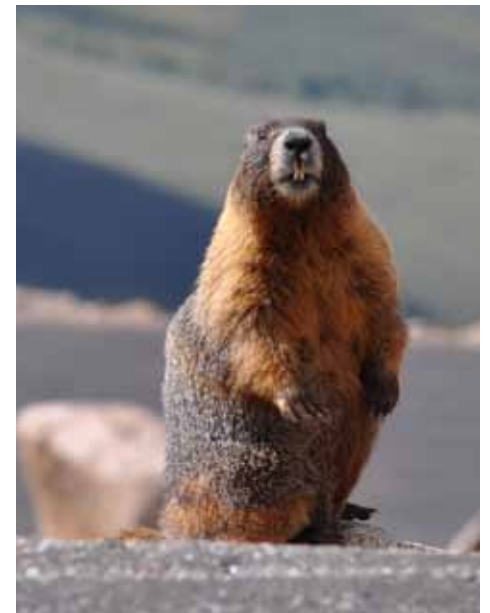
Sherman Wing "found out where the **Common Nighthawks** are." He saw more than a dozen soaring above the Platte River near Casper on July 31, and several perched in trees.

### Bosque del Apache, N.M.

Hundreds of birders from all over the United States, including me, showed up on the Marsh Boardwalk at Bosque del Apache to view a U.S. record bird, the **Rufous-necked Wood-Rail**.

It was first seen July 7 and last seen July 18.

I snagged the lifer rail and a lifer **Red-faced Warbler** at nearby Water Canyon.



Yellow-bellied Marmot. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes

To report local sightings or read the archives, go to [evergreenaudubon.org](http://evergreenaudubon.org) and click on Local Sightings.

The Photo Gallery on the website displays photos of many sightings referenced in Bird Business.



# Annual picnic draws Auduboners to Dedisse Park

July 27 was a beautiful day to hang out at the top of Dedisse Park overlooking

Evergreen Lake for the annual Evergreen Audubon picnic.

As people gathered and the potluck dishes were assembled on the tables, it was clear that we had the most impressive dessert spread in years!

After everyone gorged themselves with appetizers, main dishes, barbecue and awesome desserts, the guest of honor appeared.

It was non-other than the illustrious botanist C.C. Parry, who discovered the Blue Spruce (Colorado's State Tree) on top of Pikes Peak in 1862, impersonated by John Stienle of the Heritage House museum.

Decked out in the attire of the time, he talked about his adventures with other famous naturalists of the time and the new plants they discovered on their travels.

To end the afternoon, Heather Johnson, EA board secretary, put everyone in the mood to share their summer bird stories with her "portable campfire" and her yummy pre-made s' mores.

- Lisa Wald  
Communications Director



Ron Belak demonstrates how to put out a fire, with Peg Linn, left, and Lisa Wald. Photo by Heather Johnson

## NATURE CENTER KIDS PROGRAMS

Call Evergreen Nature Center, 303-330-0489, to register.

### Wednesday Wild Ones: Black Bear Stretch

Sept. 4, 10–11 a.m.

Ages 2–5 with adult

Run, climb, dig and lie around, like black bears do every day! Fall is a busy bear time, and we are joining in the fun to learn about life as a hungry Colorado bear preparing for winter.

### Bear Creek Dippers: Colorado Cats

Saturday, Sept. 14, 10 a.m.–noon

Ages 6–10 with adult

Dedisse Park

Colorado is home to the cougar, lynx and misnamed ringtail cat. Learn how these impressive hunters have adapted to succeed as we explore the rocky woods of Dedisse Park.



Ma and Pa Lesser Goldfinches teach junior the ins and outs of proper bathing technique in Bear Creek at Lair o' the Bear Park on Aug. 2. Photographer Susan Harper thinks the streaky one is junior, with the same bill and size/shape as mom and dad. "We've been watching these guys bathing in this spot for several weeks now and they really get into it!" Susan added.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sept. 4	Wednesday Wild Ones	10–11 am	Nature Center
Sept. 5	EA Chapter Meeting	7 pm	Church of the Hills
Sept. 7	Stargazing	8 pm	Evergreen Lake House lawn
Sept. 10	Newsletter deadline	5 pm	
Sept. 14	Bear Creek Dippers	10 am–noon	Nature Center
Sept. 16	BHB Decorations Meeting	5–8 pm	

### Mark Your Calendar:

Oct. 3 Bird House Bash 5:30–8:30 pm Lake House

Please submit newsletter content by the 10th of the month to **Lisa Wald** at [communications@evergreenaudubon.org](mailto:communications@evergreenaudubon.org), and *Dipper* editor **Debbie Marshall** at [marshallpublish@gmail.com](mailto:marshallpublish@gmail.com), 303-886-0593.

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Audubon Colorado Office, 303-415-0130, [www.auduboncolorado.org](http://www.auduboncolorado.org)

### Evergreen Audubon Local Membership Application

I/we would like to join the Evergreen Audubon. I/we may participate in all chapter activities, receive *The Dipper* newsletter electronically, and vote (two Family members may vote) on chapter issues. Dues remain locally.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

	Individual	Family
Annual dues	\$ 20	\$ 30
Electronic <i>Dipper</i>	\$ 0	\$ 0
Hard-copy <i>Dipper</i> (members only)	\$ 15	\$ 15
Additional donation	\$ _____	\$ _____
<b>Total</b>	\$ _____	\$ _____

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Family member(s) name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

(must include for electronic *Dipper*)

Enclosed is my check payable to: **Evergreen Audubon, P.O. Box 523, Evergreen, CO 80437.**

I DO NOT want solicitations from National Audubon.

If you would like to join or donate to the National Audubon Society directly and receive the AUDUBON Magazine, use chapter code C9ZD090Z and call 1-800-274-4201.

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Birds of Two Worlds: Chapter Meeting  
Annual Picnic Highlights  
Veterans Paver Dedicated

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